

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow.

Status of Claims:

No claims are currently being cancelled.

Claim 17 is currently being added.

Claims 2-4, 6-11 and 13-16 are currently being amended.

This amendment amends and adds claims in this application. A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claims remain under examination in the application, is presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

After amending and adding the claims as set forth above, claims 1-17 are now pending in this application.

Comments re: Notice of Non-Compliant Amendment:

This amendment and reply indicates that claims 8, 11, and 14 are withdrawn and currently amended.

Please note that claims 10, 11 and 16 have also been amended to eliminate possible antecedent basis issues.

Claim Rejections – Prior Art:

In the Office Action of August 11, 2005, claims 1-16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,028,577 to Sakamoto. The Examiner is respectfully referred to the remarks in the February 8, 2006 reply.

New Claim:

New claim 17 has been added, whereby support for the features recited in that claim may be found, for example, in Figure 4 of the drawings and in the description of that figure in the specification. Such features as recited in claim 17 are not believed to be disclosed or suggested by Sakamoto.

Conclusion:


Since all of the issues raised in the Office Action have been addressed, Applicants believe that the present application is now in condition for allowance, and an early indication of allowance is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicants hereby petition for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorize payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

Date May 12, 2008

By 

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